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NSC/ExCom/BSR-NATO

RECORD OF MEETING NO. 4  
1100 Hours, 27 October 1962

1. Daily Briefing

The situation briefing was omitted today. (Mr. Nitze was detained and Admiral Lee took the chair.)

2. U.S.-Berlin Buildup

It was agreed that Paper No. 7 revised on the date of 27 October 1962 would be sent forward to the Executive Committee on Monday morning, 29 October, with the inclusion of a statement indicating that a supporting study is being prepared which assesses the economic implications for the budget and the balance of payments. This study will be provided by the Department of Defense in conjunction with the DOD Comptroller's office. (Action: Admiral Lee.)

3. Consultation with Allies

The subject was discussed at length. Mr. Schaetzl stressed the dilemma involved in trying to keep the Allies sufficiently informed to carry them with us while at the same time guarding the security of our deliberations and decisions. He pointed out that it would be highly desirable for the Allies to be kept abreast of the developing situation through official U.S. channels rather than through the press. Proposals were made to have Mr. Thompson and Mr. Nitze give regular briefings to the quadripartite Ambassadors; to have a cable based on these briefings sent to Mr. Finletter for briefing the MAC a few hours later; and to have the Finletter cable used by Defense for briefing the Standing Group and Military Committee. Mr. Schaetzl will have a paper on Monday setting forth this proposal in detail. General Twitchell was asked to put in a paper at the same time on the possibility of supplying screened operational information. Mr. Schaetzl will also look into the question of making similar periodic reports to other nations through our embassies. (Action: Mr. Schaetzl and General Twitchell.)

4. Base Trade-Off

The subject was discussed and while no firm and formal judgments were reached the sense of the group was that the door should be closed as quickly as possible on the idea of trading the U.S. position in Turkey for the Soviet position in Cuba. In connection with the nervousness of the Turks on this score, it was proposed that a special envoy possibly Mr. Livingston Merchant should be sent to Ankara to consult with the Turkish government and keep them informed of developments in this area.

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5. Khrushchev Letter

(Mr. Nitze joined the meeting at this point.) Mr. Nitze summarized the contents of the letter sent by Khrushchev last night to the President and also referred to a subsequent TASS release which linked the Cuban missiles with those in Turkey. Mr. Nitze read a draft of a proposed reply and there was a brief discussion with particular emphasis on its final paragraph which referred to the security of nations outside the Western Hemisphere. The sense of the group regarding the need to keep Turkish bases from being linked in any way with the Cuban situation was conveyed to Mr. Nitze.

6. Administrative

There will be no meeting on Sunday, October 28, except at the call of the chair. Future meetings will be scheduled to begin at 11:30.

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